

Newport Recreation Advisory Commission
September 18, 2014
6:30 PM
Approved October 17, 2014

Present Members:

Sammy Hammond, Robert Lewis, P.K. Johnson, Holly Campbell, CD Whitlow and Robert Harrell

Excused Members:

Laura Lee Davis

Guest:

Frank Blunt

Steve Blizzard

Staff:

Angela Christian, Manager

Kelley Caldwell

Town Council:

Chuck Shinn

The September 18, 2014 meeting of the Recreation Advisory Commission was called to order at 6:30 pm by Chairman Sammy Hammond. He then called for the adoption of the agenda. **Robert Lewis moved to adopt the agenda as presented, C.D. Whitlow seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous.**

Mr. Hammond then gave the members ample time to review the minutes of the August 26, 2014 meeting. **P.K. Johnson moved to approve the minutes as written. Robert Lewis seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous.**

Old Business:

Comprehensive Recreation Plan: Chairman Hammond requested this item remain on the agenda until after the new members of the Recreation Advisory Commission were selected by Town Council.

Membership Application Review: Mr. Hammond noted the RAC Application for membership was provided for review. There is a hard copy and an on line version of the application. (See attached). The application remains the same, however, there is additional space available for the applicant to add Volunteer service. Mrs. Christian stated she will be providing the Town Council with the application for their review. After some discussion Mr. Hammond called for a motion to approve. **C.D. Whitlow moved to approve the RAC application revisions with a recommendation to the Town Council for approval. Holly Campbell seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous.**

Community Garden Report: Mr. Hammond briefed the members on the status of the Community Garden explaining that the Town Council is looking for a recommendation from this Commission as to

the continuation of the garden. Mrs. Christian also explained that if the garden was discontinued the remaining grant money would need to be returned. Mr. Hammond suggested it was not his intention to send the grant money back. He asked for more inclusion in the decision making process with regard to the garden. Mr. Hammond stressed open communication is important. Mr. Hammond called for a motion. **Robert Lewis moved to send a recommendation to the Town Council to continue the progress on the Community Garden. Holly Campbell seconded the motion. Discussion:** P.K. Johnson asked that information regarding the garden be brought to the RAC for consideration. C.D. Whitlow noted that goes without saying. Mr. Harrell asked if this was a yearly obligation. Mr. Hammond stated the question was not for us to decide. Mr. Hammond suggested the property would not be obligated for more than a year at time simply because the Town may not know what the property will be needed for in the future. He then called for the vote. **Vote: Unanimous.**

Heritage Days: Mr. Hammond confirmed volunteers for Heritage Days events on Saturday and stated we will be setting up the corn hole boards by the playground equipment and new fossil pit. He thanked Brian Harrell for the delivery of the fossil pit material. Mr. Hammond also thanked Holly for choosing the giveaway trinkets we will be awarding as prizes in the "hide the apple game." Mr. Hammond stated he would pick up a few bales of hay and a bushel of apples from Willis Farms. Mr. Hammond will also be providing a 10' x 10' tent and a table. Mr. Hammond suggested coming up with a 5 or 6 question survey regarding recreation for availability at the tent. He concluded by suggesting volunteers gather at the site to help set up at 8:00am.

Bicycle Helmet Safety: Holly Campbell recently met with Newport Police Officer Pollock to discuss a partnership for this initiative. The NPD is completely "on board". The dead line for the NC Department of Transportation Bicycle Helmet Initiative grant application is October 15, 2014 with an award of grant funds taking place in 2015. There was some discussion with some shared ideas. Mr. Hammond stated that he would like the opportunity to fill out the grant in partnership with Mrs. Campbell. Mr. Hammond then asked for a consensus to move forward with this project. **All members were in agreement and shared a consensus of support for this worthwhile initiative.**

Litter Sweep: Town Manager, Angela Christian noted the County wide Litter Sweep is October 18. She will be forwarding an email later in the month. She noted it's a partnership and doesn't require any action at this time.

Newport Pig Cookin' Application: Mr. Hammond stated he recently met with President of the Pig Cookin' Assoc., Jimmy Bristle to discuss the possibility of the Town applying for a grant through the Pig Cookin'. Mr. Hammond asked if the group wanted to apply for funding for the playground equipment or for repairs to the parking lot by the basketball court. Mrs. Christian pointed out some of the playground equipment components have become obsolete and it's difficult to find replacement parts. Mrs. Christian suggested there would be partnerships with the Town and other businesses for funding purposes. The applications are due November 1, 2014. After some additional exchange of ideas Mr. Hammond called for a motion. **C.D Whitlow moved to pursue the grant application requesting \$5,000 in funding from the Newport Pig Cookin'. Robert Harrell seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous.**

New Business:

Citizens Comments: Mr. Hammond recognized Mr. Steve Blizzard for comments. Mr. Blizzard thanked the RAC for sending the recommendation of approval for the Garden to the Council for their consideration. He agreed the garden had a rocky start and with better communication things could be corrected. He noted Holly's garden report told a very good story. Mr. Blizzard suggested looking at one recent survey the Town did during the long range planning meetings and another survey taken about seven years ago, both asked questions about recreation. Mr. Blizzard also suggested donating the bicycles in surplus to a non-profit group for distribution. Mr. Blizzard suggested applying for grants for the playground equipment replacement stating his wife Tammy receives several emails regarding grants. Mr. Hammond thanked Mr. Blizzard stating Mrs. Blizzard shares the grant information with him on a regular basis.

Financial Report: The expenses to date are \$1,078 for basketball goal repairs, \$506 for two pet waste stations, two months payments for two port-a-johns and some janitorial supplies. Mr. Hammond will ask the finance officer about the janitorial supplies expense. Mr. Hammond talked about the budget process stating the original request from the RAC was for \$7,500. He went on to explain only \$5,000 of the request was in "new money" and the other \$2,500 came from the Recreation fund Balance. He noted there was \$8,100 in the "savings" and is now down to \$5,664.50. He realized this at the last Town Council meeting during the budget amendment process.

Water Fountain: Mr. Hammond suggested this be taken up next month. Angela Christian, Town Manager stated Joe Johnson did research on this subject and she will have more information to share at the October meeting.

Council Comments: Councilman Chuck Shinn expressed his appreciation to the members for changing the meeting time. He also extended his assistance with any of the upcoming projects. Mr. Shinn stated he wished everybody had the same passion and enthusiasm as Miss Holly since there is nothing we couldn't achieve with that same passion and enthusiasm. Mr. Shinn stated open dialog is important to reaching a common goal. Mr. Shinn believes the Garden is a worthwhile project and he'd like to see it continue. He expressed the importance of being open and clear as to the future plans for the garden. Mr. Shinn thanked everyone for their volunteer hours.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Kelley Caldwell